

No to same sex marriage

Luter splits with Obama over controversial issue

PLEASANT GARDEN, N.C. (BP and local reports) — Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) President Fred Luter told a group of North Carolina pastors that he has split with U.S. President Barack Obama on same sex marriage and warned the Calvinism debate within the SBC, left unaddressed, could rise to disastrous levels.

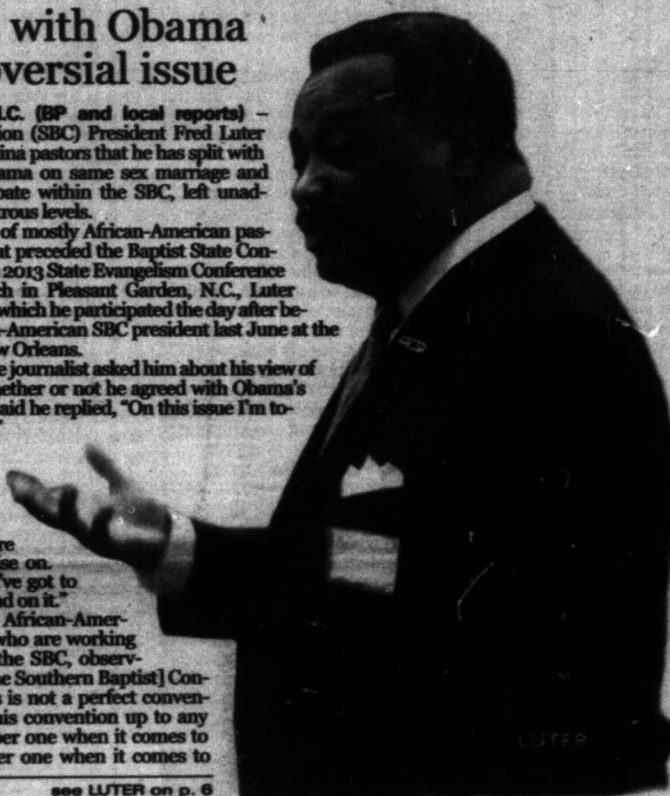
Speaking at a breakfast of mostly African-American pastors and church leaders that preceded the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina's 2013 State Evangelism Conference at Pleasant Garden Church in Pleasant Garden, N.C., Luter mentioned an interview in which he participated the day after being elected the first African-American SBC president last June at the SBC annual meeting in New Orleans.

During the interview, the journalist asked him about his view of same sex marriage and whether or not he agreed with Obama's stance on the issue. Luter said he replied, "On this issue I'm totally against the President."

Turning to the breakfast attendees, Luter added, "Folks, we're either going to be people of the Book or not. There's just some things in Scripture that we cannot compromise on. We've got to preach it, we've got to live it, and we've got to stand on it."

Luter commended the African-American pastors and leaders who are working inside the framework of the SBC, observing, "I've been a part of [the Southern Baptist] Convention for 26 years. This is not a perfect convention, but... I would put this convention up to any in the world. We're number one when it comes to evangelism. We're number one when it comes to

see LUTER on p. 6



LUTER

Imprisoned minister's wife disappointed in lack of help from U.S.

WASHINGTON (BP and local reports) — Naghme Abedini has told members of the U.S. Congress she is disheartened the Obama administration is not helping her husband Saeed Abedini, an American citizen who is being persecuted and tortured in an Iranian prison for his Christian faith.

Testifying March 15 on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C., Naghme Abedini said, "I must say I am disappointed with our government. I am disappointed that our president and our State Department have not fully engaged in this case... I expect more from our government."

"[W]e should know as American citizens that our government will stand up to protect our beliefs, our fundamental human rights," she said.

Her husband has reported that Iranian authorities at the notorious Evin prison in Tehran are torturing him and pressuring him to deny Christ. Iranian officials arrested and imprisoned him last year, and a court sentenced him in January to eight years in prison for endangering Iran's "national security" by planting house churches a decade ago in the Middle Eastern country.

Saeed Abedini, 32 and a father of two, is an ordained minister of Iranian descent who became a United States citizen in 2010.

Naghme Abedini joined others in testifying before members of the U.S. House of Representatives Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission about the eroding conditions for religious minorities in Iran, which is ruled by an extremist Islamic regime.

The U.S. State Department was invited to send a representative to the hearing, but chose not to do so. With the exception of written statements recited at press briefings, it is not clear what concrete actions, if any, have been taken by the U.S. government to push for Saeed Abedini's freedom.

A State Department spokeswoman, Victoria Nuland, said at a March 15 briefing Abedini is "unjustly imprisoned and ought to be released."

Others who did show up for the hearing criticized the Obama administration more strongly than did Naghme Abedini. "The problem is that the State Department is AWOL," said Jay Sekulow, chief counsel of the American Center for Law and Justice (ACLJ), which is representing Abedini's family. They act as if they are embarrassed about Mr. Abedini's faith."

"[W]hat our State Department is doing is abysmal," said Sekulow, who said its actions show a "stunning lack of concern for protecting human rights and religious freedom."

U.S. Rep. Trent Franks (R-Az), a commission member, said the State Department "should be utterly ashamed for their failure to speak out" in behalf of Abedini and his family. He described the department's response as a "deafening and almost cowardly silence."

The March 15 hearing apparently prompted some action by the State Department. Later in the day, Naghme Abedini, Sekulow and ACLJ Executive Director

now met



ABEDINI

GuideStone takes top award, again

DALLAS (BP) — For the second year in a row, GuideStone Financial Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention has been recognized in the Lipper Fund Awards, with the MyDestination 2025 Fund being named Best Fund Over Three Years among Mixed-Asset Target 2025 Funds.

"The Lipper Award recognizes a standard of excellence that we pursue daily," said O.S. Hawkins, GuideStone's president. "...[W]e have a vision statement which reads, 'GuideStone Financial Resources exists to honor the Lord by being a lifelong partner with our participants in enhancing their financial security.'"

"The Lipper Award, we believe, gives evidence to our commitment."

Jeff Tjornehoj, head of Lipper Americas Research, one of the financial world's leading fund research and analysis organizations, said the Lipper awards

"honor those funds that excelled at producing superior risk-adjusted returns for their investors. For that, we are pleased to recognize GuideStone's MyDestination 2025 Fund as the top Mixed-Asset Target 2025 Fund over the past three years."

"We have said many times in the past that people often think that they have to compromise their biblical integrity for investment performance," said Roddy Cummins, vice president and chief investment officer of GuideStone Funds. "We believe we continue to dispel that myth, which is evidenced by this most recent Lipper accolade."

GuideStone Funds was honored during an awards reception and dinner sponsored by The Wall Street Journal and Thomson-Reuters on March 14 in New York City. GuideStone Funds was the first Christian-based socially screened fund family to win the premier Lipper honor.

MyDestination Funds was the nation's first Christian-based socially screened date target fund when it was launched in August 2006. The MyDestination 2025 Fund was ranked No. 1 among 92 similar funds for its performance over the three years ending Nov. 30, 2012.

Earlier in 2012, the entire GuideStone Funds family was ranked No. 1 out of 182 eligible fund families with up to \$40 billion in assets, receiving Lipper's Best Overall Small Fund Group in the U.S. over the three-year period ending Nov. 30, 2011, for fund groups with at least three equity, three bond, and three mixed-asset classes.

GuideStone Funds has achieved its recognitions through a proprietary manager-of-managers investment platform that leverages what GuideStone believes to be the best possible intellectual capital worldwide.

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From the editor

WILLIAM PERKINS

A Great Commission rollback?

As I sat last Sunday during worship service in the comfortable, padded chair in the climate-controlled worship center of my well-appointed church, my thoughts ran to Saeed Abedini and the brutality he was enduring at that very moment.

As I enjoyed a sumptuous lunch fit for a potentate at my home after church, I wondered if he had eaten that day or the day before or the day before that. As my wonderful family surrounded me on that beautiful afternoon, I wondered when Saeed would see his young children again — if ever.

Saeed Abedini is the Iranian-born, naturalized U.S. citizen and ordained Christian minister who is currently imprisoned in the squalid Evin Prison in Tehran. His alleged crime? Starting Christian house churches in his former homeland, which is currently ruled by an extremist Islamic theocracy.

While in Iran last September to oversee the construction of orphanages, he was arrested and, after a show trial before something called the Revolutionary Court, sentenced to eight years imprisonment for attempting to undermine state security.

In letters and messages he was able to send from Evin Prison, Abedini describes the conditions endured by Christians inside the prison walls. He wrote that he has been tortured and is under constant threat from Muslim inmates, who would like nothing better than to curry favor with the prison's notoriously sadistic guards by harming him or even killing the Christian infidel for the glory of Islam.

He also reports that since he is considered unclean by virtue of his Christianity, he has had difficulty receiving adequate food and medical attention since most of the officials at the prison want nothing to do with him.

All of that information was sent before his show trial before the Revolutionary Court. There has been no word from him since his conviction.

Abedini has a wife and two small children in the U.S. This whole mockery of justice involving their husband and father has understandably been very difficult for them. His wife Naghmeh is greatly concerned for his safety, and the children don't understand why their father has seemingly abandoned them.

Testifying March 15 before the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission in

the U.S. House of Representatives in Washington, D.C., Naghmeh Abedini said the U.S. government has been of virtually no help with Saeed's plight.

"I must say I am disappointed with our government. I am disappointed that our president and our State Department have not fully engaged in this case. ... I expect more from our government. [W]e should know as American citizens that our government will stand up to protect our beliefs, our fundamental human rights," she said, according to a March 18 article provided by Baptist Press.



ABEDINI

The testimony of Jay Sekulow, chief counsel for the American Center for Law and Justice (ACLJ), which is representing Abedini's family, was also included in the Baptist Press article. "The problem is that the State Department is AWOL. They act as if they are embarrassed about Mr. Abedini's faith. [W]hat our State Department is doing is abysmal."

As if to prove the point, the State Department invited but did not send an official representative to the hearing.

What a disgrace. One of the most important duties of the U.S. State Department since its establishment in 1789 has been to protect American interests around the world, and that formally includes intervening for U.S. citizens unjustly held in foreign countries. If Abedini is not being held unjustly, then the definition should be changed.

Why hasn't the Obama Administration — and more specifically, Obama's Secretary of State John Kerry — been more engaged in Abedini's case and the plight of hundreds of other Christians who have disappeared into the maw of such places as Evin Prison? Iran is certainly not the only country in the world where this is happening.

Could it be that the plight of such Christians doesn't matter to them? Could they be trying to placate the Islamic radicals who govern most of these countries, for some unfathomable reason? Are Abedini and the many more like him simply not on their radar? Are they asleep at the wheel?

Whatever the reason for our government's non-response in the Abedini case, our enemies are drawing their own conclusions — and those conclusions don't bode well for those like Saeed Abedini who are bold enough to put action into the Great Commission (Matt. 28:18-20).

Hold the eye-rolling, please

Doesn't it strike you that we are being desensitized and bombarded by all things crude and illicit?

The dispiriting condition of our present culture suggests so. This indifference to the elevation of crudity and the dumbing down of today's culture by many in Hollywood gets a free pass by many who provide critiques, religious or non.

Ah, I sense some eye-rolling from those who ridicule movie reporters they consider "profanity counters." Well, I hope they'll hear me out.

Rather than focus on the glaring offenses of sexual content or desensitizing violence — not to mention the political and social agendas of the makers of movies — let's concentrate on one specific area: language.

Surely, coarse dialogue in nearly every film no matter the subject, the genre, or the class of characters featured, is symbolic of the film industry's influence on the culture and therefore the society.

At the end of a press screening for some R-rated film, I discussed the subject with a fellow critic who views movies from a decidedly secular viewpoint. As I often do, I brought up the picture's offensive language. He said he didn't mind bad language in a film so long as it wasn't gratuitous. A bit perplexed, I remember responding, "They used the 'f-word' nearly 70 times. How gratuitous does it have to get?"

He had no answer, but at least he was gentleman enough not to roll his eyes.

For a moment, let's ignore Bible verses that concern what we should and shouldn't put in our heads. Let's just look at objectionable material in movies from a non-pious, artistic approach.

Most critics reward movies for their technical and artistic merits, while at the same time disregarding the effect of movie content on the culture. This may be shortsighted, for words vocalize our foibles and frailties and nobilities.

Words articulate views of beauty, humor, and meaning. Yet we are in an era when vulgarity dominates movie discourse. While Hollywood reflects each generation's evolution, can members of that industry deny their influence on how we dress, relate — or, yes, speak?

Though a rose is a rose, a word is more than just a word. Words have power because they reveal inner character.



Guest opinion

with Phil Boatwright

There should be a respect for language by those who make their living using it. Their chosen vocation has to do with the world of communication, yet much more effort goes into special effects than the authoring of screen conversation. At least it seems that way. This is an artistic failing as motion pictures shouldn't just show what we are, but also what we can become.

That's the ultimate purpose of an art form. Otherwise, it isn't doing all the art form is capable of accomplishing.

Let's go back to what the Bible says about what we say:

■ "Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs" (Ephesians 4:29).

■ "You shall not misuse the name of the Lord your God, for the Lord will not hold anyone guiltless who misuses his name" (Exodus 20:4). That command comes before those that pertain to coveting, adultery, or even murder. It must be somewhat important to the Creator of everything.

If words are the summation of the heart's thoughts, then surely people who constantly misuse God's name are contemptuous of His nature. Even if those in Hollywood don't believe in a Creator, shouldn't they at least respect those who do? They apparently feel a responsibility to regard everybody else. (Well, except for conservatives but we won't go there today.)

Who am I kidding? Hollywood isn't going to change, nor is the surrounding society. What about us?

The Christian, who is instructed to

see BOATWRIGHT on p. 7

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Pakistani Muslims allowed to 'vent' on Christians

LAHORE, Pakistan (BP and local reports) — Muslim mobs upset over an alleged derogatory comment about Islamic prophet Muhammad burned down more than 180 Christian-owned houses and shops and at least two church buildings in Lahore, Pakistan, on March 9, after authorities told police to "let them vent their grief and anger," officials said.

Lahore's impoverished Joseph Colony section looked like a war-ravaged town by the night of March 9. There were no reports of casualties, but the site was reminiscent of the destruction in Gojra in 2009, when eight Christians were burned alive, 100 houses looted, and 50 homes set ablaze after a blasphemy accusation.

"The police let our homes burn and be vandalized... a heavy price to pay when you are a Christian in Pakistan," an area resident identified only as Shaikat told Morning Star News Saturday night as he walked dingy streets littered with burnt furniture and appliances, smoke billowing from small houses while firemen continued to put out blazes.

The entire locality was left to the mobs just because a Christian happened to get involved in a dispute with a Muslim," he said.

Shahid Imran, a Muslim barber in Joseph Colony in the Badami Bagh area, on March 8 accused his Christian neighbor, 26-year-old Sawan Masih, of blaspheming Muhammad. Imran alleged that Masih, who runs a small billiards business, had "ridiculed" Islam's prophet by saying that Jesus was the greatest prophet ever.

Soon after, crowds of armed Muslims began gathering in the area of about 200 Christian families, mostly sanitation workers, demanding that Masih be handed over to them. They besieged his house and started pelting it with stones, damaging the windows and door.

Masih had fled the area as soon as news reached him about Imran's accusation.

A senior police officer told Morning Star News that they tried to calm the mob, telling them that the matter would be thoroughly



TARGETING CHRISTIANS — A Muslim mob attacks a Christian area of Lahore on March 9 after questionable allegations of blasphemy involving the Islamic prophet Mohammad were lodged against a Christian man who lives in the area. (BP photo courtesy of M. Ali)

investigated. A local trade union leader, Muhammad Amir, seconded the police appeal.

The situation worsened, however, when a rival group of Amir arrived and began accusing him and police of supporting a "blasphemer."

The senior police official said that in order to calm tensions they took Masih's father, Chaman Masih, into custody. "At the police station, Chaman Masih denied that his son had committed any blasphemy," the official said. "He even challenged Imran to take an oath on the Koran to prove his allegation."

Back at Joseph Colony, mobs ransacked Masih's house and demanded registration of a case against him. At the local police station, meantime, members of the Sunni Tehreek, a religious-political Sunni Muslim group, also arrived and presented two witnesses, identified as Shafiq and Iftikhar.

"They claimed that Masih had blasphemed in their presence,"

the official said. "By then we had begun to doubt the veracity of the charge as the witnesses were revealed after several hours of the alleged incident, but the situation was such that we had to register a case against Masih under Section 295-C to prevent further violence and religious strife," he said.

Section 295-C of the Pakistan Penal Code calls for death or life imprisonment for those accused of blaspheming Muhammad.

On March 8, the police officer had indicated to Morning Star News that there were reports suggesting religiously motivated violence and he vowed to protect the Christians, though most of them had already left their homes anticipating mayhem.

Around 10 a.m. on March 9, Muslim mobs began gathering in Joseph Colony in spite of heavy police deployment — but the provincial government led by the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) had ordered police not to hinder the protestors and "let them vent their grief and anger,"

another senior police officer told Morning Star News on condition of anonymity.

Taking their cue from the police's indifference, the mobs set fire to almost 170 houses and 18 shops, as well as Assemblies of God and Catholic church buildings. A large number of motorcycles and rickshaws were also burned amid the looting mobs. Two police officials who tried to negotiate with the assailants were beaten.

Police reportedly arrested 160 suspected assailants, though such arrests rarely lead to prosecution. Raja Asif, a Christian sanitation worker who has lived in the area for 35 years, said a large police contingent only looked on, fingering their weapons but not taking a step forward to stop the mobs from destroying their homes.

Area resident Haroon Masih wept as he described how the raiders broke the locks of his door and stole the dowries of his four daughters that he had been gathering for several years. "They

made off with everything valuable I had and then simply set the house on fire. My new rickshaw was also burnt to ashes."

Residents also showed Morning Star News gas pipelines that had been sawed off to ensure maximum spread of fires.

Muhammad Mustafa, a Muslim who owns a tea stall, said he and others tried to stop the mobs from burning the houses of innocent people. "We tried to stop them, but they wouldn't listen. We have been living with these Christians for the last several years, and there has been no religious animosity between us."

He added that he regretted that the government's callousness had resulted in huge losses for poor Christians. Most of the Christian residents had left the area by the evening of March 8, and those who remained barely managed to save their lives as the passion-driven mobs went on a rampage.

The mobs dispersed with the intervention of Badshahi Mosque prayer leader Abdul Khabeer Azad, too late for area residents.

Chief Justice Iftikhar Muhammad Chaudhry today held the Punjab Province inspector general of police, the Lahore police chief and the civil administration responsible for the Joseph Colony violence. He also rebuked the Punjab government for its inaction on the Gojra attack, saying such indifference encouraged violence against minorities.

As the area simmered in smoke, Punjab Chief Minister Shahbaz Sharif held a press conference on the night of March 9, announcing that each Christian family affected would receive 200,000 rupees (US \$2,045) in compensation. He also said that displaced Christians would be restored to their homes in four days and that the government would hold a judicial enquiry by the Lahore High Court.

Editor's Note: This article first appeared at MorningStarNews.org, an independent news service focusing exclusively on the persecution of Christians worldwide.

Florida man files 50th suit over abortion/contraceptive mandate

TAMPA, Fla. (BP) — A Southern Baptist business owner whose ancestors fled England four centuries ago to escape religious persecution has filed suit against the Obama administration's abortion/contraceptive mandate, bringing to 50 the number of lawsuits against the controversial policy.

"This is a case about religious freedom," the 48-page complaint reads.

The Thomas More Law Center filed the suit March 12 on behalf of Thomas R. Beckwith, the CEO of Beckwith Electric Co. in Largo, Fla. Beckwith is a descendant of the Beckwiths, who in 1626 "endured the hardships of the lengthy and storm-ridden voyage" across the Atlantic Ocean via a 40-foot ship called the Spar-

row Hawk to "escape religious persecution from England," the complaint says. His ancestors also fought in the Connecticut Militia in the Revolutionary War, the complaint adds.

The mandate was issued by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services in August 2011 and went into effect one year later. It forces businesses to pay for employee insurance plans that cover contraceptives and abortion-causing drugs. The latter often are called "emergency contraceptives" and come under brand names such as Plan B and ella.

Beckwith, a member of First Church of Indian Rocks in Largo, Fla., rejects the notion his business must pay for drugs that are "capable of destroying a human life

even after implantation on the uterine wall," the complaint reads. The complaint quotes extensively the positions of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) on life and religious liberty and also quotes the SBC's Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission and its president, Richard Land.

If Beckwith's company does not comply with the mandate, it would face fines of more than six million dollars per year, according to a press release.

"Based on the beliefs and teachings of the Southern Baptist Convention, and their deeply held beliefs" Beckwith does "not believe that emergency contraception, abortion, abortifacients" and any drug that destroys human life constitutes medicine or health care, the complaint says.

"Indeed, Plaintiffs believe these procedures and drugs involve gravely immoral practices," the complaint reads.

Beckwith, the complaint reads, "is guided by his religious beliefs in all aspects of his life." His company is "managed under the living God's direction and by God's principles," it says.

The company employs 168 people, is generous in its employee benefits, and employs a chaplain, the complaint says. The company has donated to schools, missions, hospitals, churches, and religious causes.

The company provides financial assistance to New Life Solutions, which is the ministry head of several crisis pregnancy centers in Florida.

It was tournament time in high schools and colleges across the land as basketball was winding down its season. I was watching the sports update one morning to see who won, who lost, and what exciting plays had taken place. One of the clips being shown over and over was of the closing seconds of a game between two girls' teams. There were only a few seconds left on the clock and the score was tied. The ball was out of bounds and about to be thrown in. The girl who was throwing the ball in got it to her teammate quickly. She turned and rushed toward the goal knowing that the time was short. She threw the ball up, and as it was going through the goal the buzzer went off, and she scored. At first, it appeared as she had gotten the ball, scored, and in so doing gave her team the championship. The problem was that she had run toward the wrong goal and scored for the opposing team. Consequently, her team went down in defeat.

I did not know the girl or the teams that were playing, but my heart ached for all of them. What a tragic way to lose a championship game — scoring for the wrong team. I also thought how embarrassing to do such a thing because her shot and their team's loss were shown over and over on national television so that everyone could laugh and share in her dumb deci-



Buzzer Beater

sion. While it may seem bizarre and strange, similar things have happened many times before that caused heartbreak and loss when someone aided the opposing team to win.

I can tell you for sure that far too many times the Lord's team, His church, and His people have aided the enemy to have victories because someone went the wrong way, did the wrong thing, and sadly brought shame upon themselves, criticism from others, and defeat rather than victory. Sometimes, as with that lady, it is just a thoughtless decision. Maybe in the heat of the moment, maybe in the pressure of making a decision, or maybe just in a conversa-

tion something was said or a response was given. If she would have had two more seconds, she would have realized what she was doing and you may have too. Yet, once the word is said, the action taken, or the response is given the buzzer sounds. The deed that is done cannot be undone.

At other times, we do things that are not earthshaking. But they are disappointing simply because we lose our focus, get confused, or we are simply not at our best. We mess up! I can tell you for sure, I have been there more times than I am going to tell you in this article.

I remember the time at a graveside funeral service when I meant to call


on a fellow pastor to have the closing prayer, but I ended up calling on the dead man to lead in the closing prayer. While he did not respond, I did live with the embarrassment of it. Sometimes we just do the wrong thing, run the wrong way, and call on the wrong person to pray. At other times, there are heartbreaking tragedies when God's children get caught in the web of sin and bring disgrace upon themselves, dishonor to His name, and the unbeliever, the cynic, the skeptic, the doubter, and the despondent are affected by the loss.

You may be living with the pain of a wrong decision and such a loss. I want you to know that God Almighty will help you and bring healing to your heart. You may be the one who scored in the wrong basket. You are wondering if you can ever rise above the moment, be forgiven, live, and serve our Lord again. You can! The promise of God is true and powerful as He gives us His assurance that "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9). But for the grace of God, there goes each of us. And by the grace of God, there is the opportunity for restoration and a new day for all of us.

The author can be contacted at directions@mbcb.org.

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1. Lord, I admit that I need you. (I have sinned.)
2. I want forgiveness for my sins and freedom from eternal death. (I repent.)
3. I believe Jesus died and rose from the grave to forgive my sins and to restore my relationship with you. (I believe in Jesus.)
4. By faith, I invite Jesus Christ into my life. From this time on, I want to live in a loving relationship with Him. (I receive Christ as my Savior and Lord.)

"But as many as received him, to them he gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in his name." (John 1:12)

If you make a decision for Christ today, contact a local Southern Baptist church for spiritual guidance.

What I tell you in the darkness, speak in the light; and what you hear whispered in your ear, proclaim upon the

HOUSE TOPS.

Matthew 10:27 NAS

March 21, 2013

HouseTops is a Baptist Record supplement produced by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board's Communication Services.

May 20, FBC, New Albany
May 21, FBC, Columbia
6 p.m. Dinner
7-9 p.m. Conference

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For more information contact Carolyn Day
1-800-748-1651 ext. 291
or 601-292-3291
cday@mbcb.org



MONDAY, APRIL 29

Hardy Street Baptist Church, Hattiesburg

Two services: 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m.

Mass Senior Adult Choir

Preacher: Fred Wolfe, Mobile, Ala.

Special Guest: Andrew Ishee, Laurel

Music Director: Slater Murphy, MBCB

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Glenn Shows, gshows@mbcb.org

Daniel Hall, dhall@mbcb.org

Ken Hopkins, khopkins@hardysbc.net
(601-544-1794)

2013 SENIOR DAY RETREATS

12:30-5:30 p.m.

"SENIORS - Heed how you hear the Word!"

Luke 8:18

Harrisburg BC, Tupelo

May 21

Preacher:

Jim Futral, MBCB

FBC, Vicksburg

May 23

Preacher:

Argile Smith, Pineview, La.

FBC, Picayune

May 30

Preacher:

Clarence Cooper, Brandon BC

Registration Cost: \$5 at the door or one week before the registration date to receive the gift bag. Mail Registration to: MBCB Conference Office, PO Box 530, Jackson MS 39205-0530 or call Jo at 800-748-1651, ext. 292

Garaywa Camp & Conference Center, Clinton
10 a.m. Monday - 4 p.m. Tuesday
 Registration is required.

For more information, contact Cathy Taylor, 1-800-748-1651, ext. 305,
 or 601-292-3305

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 Romans 16:19 (ESV)



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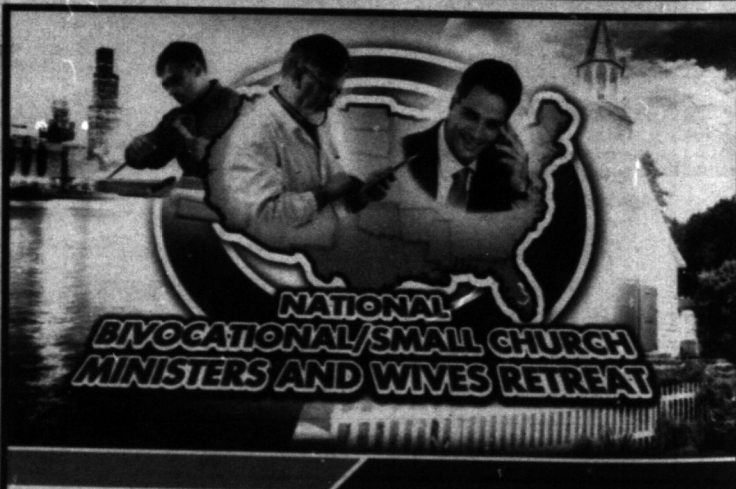
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WILLIAM CAREY UNIVERSITY
April 18-20, 2013

Look for more information in the upcoming "Tentmaker."

For more information, contact Dale Holloway
 at 1-800-748-1651, ext. 305, or 601-845-2107
 or e-mail cwtaylor@mbcb.org

SAVE THE DATE
 April 11-13, 2013 | WMU Building | 100 Missionary Ridge
BIRMINGHAM, ALABAMA

BN THIRTY-YEAR
 BAPTIST NURSING FELLOWSHIP
Anniversary
 CELEBRATION

The Story Lives On

"As for us, we cannot help speaking about
 what we have seen and heard."
 - Acts 4:20

For more information contact
 Lisa Miller in the WMU office at the
 Mississippi Baptist Convention Board
 at 601-292-3317 or lmill@mbcb.org.

STATE PREACHING CONFERENCE

April 22 — Mississippi College, Clinton
 April 23 — Blue Mountain College, Blue Mountain
 April 24 — William Carey University, Hattiesburg

Featured presenters at all locations:

Daniel Caldwell

Ronald Meeks

Wayne VanHorn

Alan Woodward

The book of Revelation — "Together for Christ"

8:30 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Contact Keith Gordon for more information,
 1-800-748-1651, ext. 307, or 601-292-3307.

Registration requested.

Pastor/Leadership Development Department



Registration Begins February 1, 2013

William Carey University, July 15-19

Blue Mountain College, July 22-26

Total Cost: \$175

Commuter Fee: \$50

For more information, see Noted Events 2013 Booklet or visit:
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 or call Patsy Alford at 601-292-3267

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CHURCH PLANTING

NORTH AMERICAN MISSIONS SUPPORT

Mississippi Baptists allocate over \$3,000,000 per year to plant churches in all 50 states and Canada. There have been about 100 church plants in Mississippi in the last 10 years. Mississippi Baptists have assisted in the planting of 155 churches in North America during the same time frame. Southern Baptist partners send almost \$40 million more through the Cooperative Program to help fund this continental mission effort.

For more information contact Lisa Leavell at leavell@mbc.org or 601-292-3347

Pray this day for...

March 22 - April 4, 2013

"The LORD is near to all them that call on him, to all that call on him in truth."

Psalm 145:18

Pray for **John* and Melinda* Kyzar**, missionaries ministering to European Peoples in the Czech Republic through "personalization," church/home outreach and evangelism.

Pray for **Henry* and Linda Lee**, missionaries ministering to East Asian Peoples in the U.S. through church planting, church/home outreach and evangelism.

Pray for **Timothy* and Rebecca* Lightsey**, missionaries ministering to American Peoples in the U.S. through strategy coordination, church/home outreach and evangelism.

Pray for **Asbury and Jeannie* Martin**, missionaries to American Peoples in Argentina through church/home outreach and evangelism.

Pray for **Robert* and Janice Mooney**, IMB missionaries to European Peoples in Latvia through strategy coordination, church/home outreach and evangelism.

Pray for a team of three from **X-tended Missions Network** going to South Asia, March 22-April 4, for church planting, evangelism, and vision.

Pray for **Millard and Susan* Jones**, missionaries ministering to East Asian and European Peoples in Canada through student evangelism.

Pray for **Kevin* and Brenda Peacock**, missionaries ministering to European Peoples in Canada through theological education and church/home outreach and evangelism.

Pray for **John and Sarah* Perkins**, missionaries ministering to European Peoples in France through mission support and church/home outreach and evangelism.

Pray for **Michael and Sarah* Prewitt**, missionaries ministering to European Peoples in Portugal through church planting, church/home outreach and evangelism.

Pray for **John* and Amy Purl**, missionaries to European Peoples in Bulgaria through volunteer coordination, community and home outreach.

Pray for **Tracy and Eugenia* Putnam**, missionaries to European Peoples in Russia through theological education, church/home outreach and evangelism.

*These International Mission Board missionaries claim Mississippi as their home state. The IMB missionaries listed in the HouseTops prayer calendar are currently active in 2-4 year terms or in career service.



Camp I - June 24-26, 2013
Camp II - June 27-29, 2013
Central Hills Baptist Retreat
Rosciusko, Miss.
Cost \$150
Camp fee includes: Lodging, meals, activities, and T-shirt

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- Church Bible Study
- Adventure Ropes Course
- Horseback Riding
- Archery/Riflery
- Swimming

Registration begins at 10 a.m. on the first day of camp.
Camp concludes with lunch on the last day of camp.
Registration begins February 1, 2013

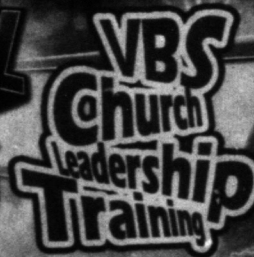
For registration information contact the MBCB Sunday School Department at 601-292-3292 or 1-800-748-1651, ext. 292.

SAVE THE DATES!

Missionary Parents Fellowship
Dates: Friday, April 19 - Saturday, April 20, 2013
Time: April 19, 2 p.m. - April 20, 12:30 p.m.
Location: Garaywa Camp & Conference Center, Clinton

Mississippi Missionary Fellowship
Date: Saturday, April 20, 2013
Time: 8:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
Location: Garaywa Camp & Conference Center, Clinton

For more information contact Lisa Miller in the WMU office at the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board at 601-292-3317 or lmiller@mbcb.org



6:30 - 9 p.m.
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Shaw, Miss.

APRIL 16, 2013
Calvary Baptist Church
Batesville, Miss.

APRIL 18, 2013
First Baptist Church
Kosciusko, Miss.

APRIL 22, 2013
First Baptist Church
McComb, Miss.
APRIL 23, 2013
Crosspoint
Hattiesburg, Miss.

For more information contact Angie Boydston at aboyston@mbcb.org or Jo Wesson at jwesson@mbcb.org or call 1-800-748-1651, ext. 292, or 601-292-3292
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HOUSE TOPS

WHY THIS BILL?

The 2013 Mississippi Legislative Session is drawing to a close. Much work has been done in the final few days, as the session is due to end on April 11. There are a few bills of great concern to us here at the CAC.

The CAC has been actively working and supporting bills relative to our mission and statement of purpose. One such bill is the **Mississippi Student Religious Liberties Act**, which has been signed into law by

Governor Phil Bryant. This new law protects students from being discriminated against due to their religious beliefs.

Another bill we have been involved in for several years is the **Child Protection Act**, which aids in curbing child rape. This bill, along with the **Women's Defense Act**, which regulates the abortion drug RU 486, is very close to becoming law.

We have also been involved in sharing the Christian position on two lending bills. Some probably

question why we get involved in these types of bills. The short answer is that we feel it is our Christian duty to do so. We get involved when Scripture speaks to a situation, in this case predatory lending.

The Bible is clear that government is ordained of God to assist mankind in living together in community. We must have laws to protect us from one another and to promote the well being of all citizens. It is not uncommon for government to forget its responsibilities and become the one inflicting hardships and misery on its people.

The Old Testament reveals that kings were the lawmakers in ancient days. Whatever the king decreed became the law of the land. Proverbs 31 records the words of one King Lemuel who shares an oracle taught to him by his mother. Here are her words as recorded in Proverbs 31:8-9, "Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, for the rights of all who are destitute. Speak up and judge fairly; defend the rights of the poor and needy." She admonishes King Lemuel to prevent others from taking advantage of the poor and destitute.

The two bills, which we have

tried to get amended or stopped altogether, have very high fees and handling charges, which result in an extremely high APR. They prey on the poor and needy. These type loans are usually small and risky, which command higher rates but not as high as these two bills seek. In the opinion of the CAC there is no justifiable reason for our senators, representatives and other elected officials to allow such

ridiculous rates.

Current law has a rate cap of 36% for installment loans, but the **Installment Loan Act** raises this rate to as high as 99%. In the case of Check Cashing Loans it can be as high as 500%.

The ones seeking these type loans are the very people who can least afford these outlandish rates and fees. Many times it is a single mom who needs a new appliance or perhaps a minimum wage earner who needs a new transmission for her old car to get to work so the family can eat. It might even be a senior adult who needs a loan so he can buy medicine for his wife.

The reason given by the supporters of these bills is their belief in a free market. I believe in a free market also but reason-

able limits are placed on other products so why not small loans?

Our state prosecutes people who raise the price of food, gas, and other commodities in the wake of a tornado or hurricane because it is unlawful and immoral to take advantage of those who have fallen victims of some ravaging storm. Yet it is okay to take advantage of those who have become the victims of unfortunate circumstances and need a small loan to get back on their feet?

The CAC needs your help so we can do a better job. The only way we can be effective is when you, our Mississippi Baptists, take the time to call, write, or visit your senator and representative. We try to keep you informed, but when we ask you to contact your officials it is most important that you do so immediately. You are the ones they hear when you speak.

If you do not receive an occasional email alert or note from the CAC it is because we do not have a way to contact you. So please, if you have an email account and would like to receive news from time to time please send it to us at rmccollum@christianaction.com.

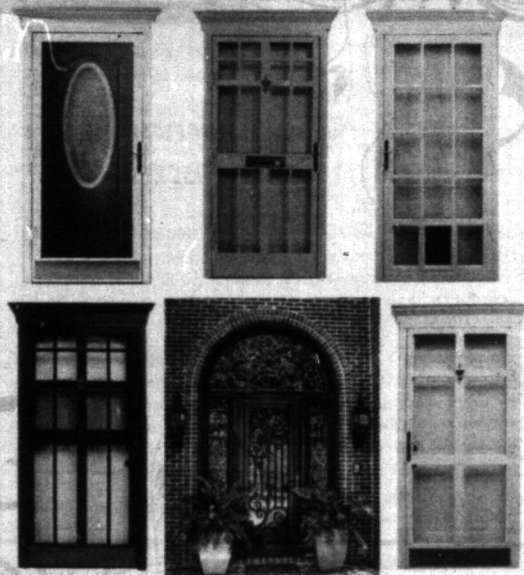
Porter serves as executive director-treasurer for the Mississippi Baptist Christian Action Commission. He can be contacted at 601-292-3332 or jporter@christianaction.com.



with Jimmy Porter

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Bivo music training course opens at 7 locations in state

JACKSON, Ms. (Special) – The month of March marks the beginning of Class Voice, the eighth music training course in a series offered at seven locations in Mississippi and sponsored by the Church Music Department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board in cooperation with the Providence Learning Center of New Orleans Seminary.

The courses are designed to provide basic training for bivocational music directors and other music leaders in churches. In most of the locations, Class Voice will meet two hours per week for eight weeks. Some locations meet on Saturday with varying times.

The cycle of courses is scheduled over a two-year period. Each course is independent and has

no prerequisite. Students who complete the eight courses earn a certificate from the Providence Learning Center.

There is a one-time enrollment fee of \$25.00. The cost of each course is \$100.00. A \$60.00 scholarship is available for all first-time students. Students already enrolled are not eligible. The grant is limited to one person per church.

Class Voice will meet at the following locations. Individual teachers listed below should be contacted for dates and times.

■ First Church, Cleveland. Alan Berry, teacher. (662)843-2701.

■ Northcrest Church, Meridian. Buddy McElroy, teacher. (601) 938-8668.

■ Easthaven Church, Brookhaven. Mark Hamilton, teacher. (601) 835-6607.

■ First Church, Starkville. Tom Jenkins, teacher. (662) 323-5633.

■ First Church, Booneville. LuAnne Ford, teacher. (662) 728-6272.

■ Broadmoor Church, Madison. Jimmy McCaleb, teacher. (601) 924-1233.

■ Handsboro Church, Gulfport. Louis White, teacher. (228) 896-3796.

The eight courses are Basic Conducting; Worship/Worship Planning; Reading Music; Rhythm/Pitch; Reading Music; Harmony/Melody; Songs and Hymns for Worship; Building Your Music Ministry; Church Music Resources; and Class Voice.

LUTER

cont. from p. 1

discipleship, number one when it comes to disaster relief."

Luter recalled how the SBC's disaster relief ministry reached out to Franklin Avenue Church in New Orleans, where he pastors, and to New Orleans residents left destitute in wake of Hurricane Katrina in 2005.

"This [convention] has a passion for reaching people," Luter said. "I promise you this convention, bar none, is one that believes in doing the Master's will, and that's why I'm proud to be a part of this convention."

Referring to the SBC debate over Calvinism and what some refer to as "traditional Baptist" views on salvation, Luter said the issue is becoming more of a distraction in Southern Baptist life.

"We have a major, major issue with Calvinism," he said. "That issue can possibly, if we don't deal with it in a Christian manner, split this convention. Every city I go to, when I [meet] with pastors, [they] will ask what's going to happen with the Calvinism issue."

SBC Executive Committee President Frank Page formed a special advisory team last year to address the Calvinism debate. The advisory team is expected to report on the issue during the Southern Baptist Convention's June annual meeting in Houston, Texas.

"There's going to be a proclamation given out that hopefully will satisfy everybody," Luter said. "We've got to look at this thing as spiritual warfare... It's an issue that has to be dealt with, and unless we deal with it in a Christian-like manner, I really believe the enemy can come and divide us."

On another subject, Luter said pastors and church leaders need to take more of a stand against the pressures of today's politically correct culture. "We've got preachers [who] are compromising the Scriptures. We need pastors and preachers in this convention who are going to stand on the Word of God."

Luter also pointed out the im-

portance of supporting the Cooperative Program (CP), which he described as "the engine that runs our convention."

"That's what helps students in our seminaries," he said. "That's what helps NAMB (North American Mission Board) do what they are doing in Alpharetta. That's what helps start churches, helps plant churches. That's what helps IMB (International Mission Board) to put more missionaries [overseas]... That's how we cooperate to do ministry."

Luter urged fellow pastors to consider increasing their CP giving under the One Percent Challenge being led by Frank Page and the SBC Executive Committee. It's worth the investment, he said.

"We can plant more churches. We can grow more churches, and we can impact the Kingdom of God," he said.

Luter shared his frustration toward pastors who have received training or financial support from Southern Baptists, but fail to give anything back to the Cooperative Program. "The [SBC has] given you funds from our local churches. The state convention has given you funds that are helping you pay salaries... and you don't give back? That's wrong."

"If the state convention [or] a local church is helping you, then as a man of God, you need to have the same conviction to give to support CP because that's how you got started. To whom much is given, much is required."

In regard to church planting, Luter said now is the time to get involved. "There is no better time in the history of this convention for church planters than right now. Kevin Ezell, (the president) over at NAMB, has taken on church planting as his numero uno assignment."

"Kevin's passion is church planting. He just has a conviction that if we're going to reach America, we need to plant churches to do that."

Luter added that providing help for existing churches is also important. "I told [Ezell], 'I support you in planting churches and starting churches, but we

cannot turn our backs on the churches that are already here that are struggling.'"

"We have a lot of churches that are struggling. They are living from week to week. We cannot totally put our efforts on church planting and not help those churches that are hurting, but there is no better time than now if you're a church planter."

Editor's Note: This article first appeared in The Biblical Recorder (brnnow.org), news journal of the North Carolina State Baptist Convention.

Minister of Music and Worship

Springfield Baptist Church in Springfield, TN is seeking a full-time leader of music and worship.

The worship leader will be responsible for planning and conducting worship services, directing various choirs, praise team and instrumentalists. Our worship services are a blend of traditional and contemporary music. A bachelor's degree in music is required. A masters degree is preferred. Please send all resumes to Springfield Baptist Church, Music Search Committee, 400 North Main Street, Springfield, TN 37172. Please include a recent worship service DVD. Emails may be sent to: belbhaber05@gmail.com.

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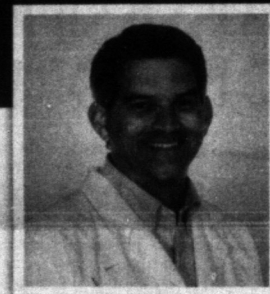
WSR QX?

GWSC EPOS: XBQSL

Clue: R = S

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Mark Three: Thirty-five

By Charles Marx, 1932-2004. © 2005



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Submission Guidelines

The Baptist Record is pleased to publish news and photographs of special events that take place in cooperating churches of the Mississippi Baptist Convention.

News submitted for publication in The Baptist Record must be either (a) typewritten, (b) neatly printed on 8 1/2 by 11-inch paper, or (c) neatly printed on standardized forms provided by the newspaper. All articles must be received in writing; no articles will be accepted over the telephone.

News may be submitted electronically to the address below, and must be contained in the message segment of an e-mail form. Due to increasing virus threats, no text attachments will be accepted. Photograph attachments are permissible.

Please make articles concise. Include the who, what, when, where details of the story, along with a contact person's address and telephone number.

Photographs may be color or black and white. Instant photos and digital printouts

are not reproducible. Digital photos may be used if submitted as a JPEG file via either e-mail, CD or DVD. Photos must be clear, sharp, and well-lighted. Cell phone photographs and other low resolution items are generally not publishable. Photographs can not be returned. Please do not attach photos with tape or staples.

All news items are subject to editing, and all photographs are subject to cropping. Photographs must depict people. No landscape, building, or object-only photographs will be printed. News items and/or photographs can be published one time only. News items and/or photographs depicting benefits and activities for secular or outside organizations will not be published. Deadline for submitting news is one week prior to requested publication date.

Articles that are not date-sensitive will be published on a space-available basis.

Submit news and photographs to The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. FAX: (601) 292-3330. E-mail: baptistrecord@mbcb.org.

Care for Others • 1 Timothy 5:1-10, 16-18

The church, the bride of Christ, must balance its work between outreach and ministry; sharing the gospel with the lost outside the church and taking care of those inside the church. The New Testament is filled with examples of both. Serving the Lord is not like going to a buffet at a cafeteria. "I want the mashed potatoes, but I do not want the Brussels Sprouts." We do not get to pick and choose which commandments we will obey, if we are indeed servants and He is our Lord. The Lord commands us to preach the gospel to the whole creation (Mark 16:15), and our Lesson passage commands that we care for our members in need.

Sadly, many churches do neither outreach or care within. The New Testament church believed both were so important that they created a new office in the church, deacon, to serve believers. From this passage we learn some truths and are encouraged to minister to our own while we simultaneously reach out to those who may one day be part of the body of Christ.

James 1:27 reads, "Pure and undefiled religion before our God and Father is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself unstained by the world." CSB. This word translated "religion" is also translated in the Greek "wor-

ship." So our worship of God includes care for those who cannot care for themselves. Examine your church and see if you have a ministry to widows and orphans. Otherwise, your church is not heeding this passage. The Lord convicted me years ago of this, and now we minister to widows and orphans, and the Lord has blessed our church as a result.

Prior to the fourth century, the church

owned little property, met mainly in homes and in public places, and had little respect and no authority. Yet, they reached so many people with the good news of the gospel of Jesus, that the Roman empire became the Holy Roman empire. They did this by caring for people and sharing the gospel.

As the early church ministered to its own and those outside the church, the world took notice and saw genuine faith. May the world today see genuine faith in us as we minister to our own and others, and

as we share the good news of Jesus Christ.

Acts 4:34-37 tells about Christians in the early church who saw a need, sold some property they had, and gave it to the apostles to meet that need. One, Joseph a Levite, or a former Jewish leader, sold something he had to help those in need. The apostles were so impressed with this man's encouraging nature, they called him Son of Encouragement, or Barnabas. This great leader of the Lord and co-worker of Paul started his ministry sharing with those in need.

Explore the Bible

with Rick Henson



At the church I serve, we minister each week to children in need at a nearby children's home. Many of those who started out serving food, now go to prisons and preach. From their own admission, these people had no intention of preaching in a prison to start, but once they began to serve the Lord, God opened doors for other ministries. Like Barnabas, many start their ministry serving others.

Jesus told the disciples they must never

cease to serve one another. In Luke 22, Jesus revealed to the disciples that one of them would betray Him. In response, they began to argue over who would be the greatest disciple. Jesus stopped their boasting and gently taught the disciples that lost people seek to be the greatest. He said in Luke 22:26, "whoever is greatest among you must become like the youngest, and whoever leads, like the one serving." CSB.

As we grow in godliness, may we learn to serve and to minister. 1 Timothy 5:8 in our Lesson Passage reads, "Now if anyone does not provide for his own relatives, and especially for his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever." CSB. If that is true for our families of birth, how much more is it true of our church families?

While some will argue whether the church should do outreach or minister to its own, the Bible requires both. Jesus said the world will know you are mine by how you love one another (John 13:35). By your current acts of service and ministry to your own people, what message are you sending to the world?

Henson is pastor of Oakdale Church, Brandon.

Being Served or Serving? • Luke 22:19-30

John and Mary Generic recently moved to town, and they are looking for a new church. Since they have daughters in the 4th and 7th grade and a two-year-old son, they are checking out the nursery, grade-school and youth programs. They enjoy contemporary music, so that's a must, and Mary is looking for a great ladies' Bible study, so she can make some new friends. John doesn't ask much, but he does want a pastor who uses a modern translation of the Bible.

Months have now passed, and the Generic family is still checking out churches. Look again at the lesson title. Can you determine part of the problem? The Generics are more focused on having their needs and desires met than in looking for ways they can connect to a church and pour out their lives in service to others. This week's lesson, the fourth in the "Questions Jesus Asked" series, calls us to consider a life of humble service to our Lord and to others.

Taking time to read the previous verses (Luke 22:1-18) will set the stage for this week's focal verses. You'll see the dramatic unfolding of scenes leading to Jesus' death. With Passover time at hand, the perfect Passover Lamb prepares for a commemorative meal with His disciples. The Lord's Supper ordinance was instituted during this reflective setting.

Breaking the bread, Jesus declared,

"This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me" (vs. 19 NIV). The cup "is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you" (vs. 20). Pause to consider the magnitude of this sacrifice. Reflect on what Christ has done for you. What are some ways you can live "in remembrance of Him?"

Incredible as it seems, as Jesus began to relate events concerning His upcoming betrayal, suffering, and shedding of blood, the Twelve started quibbling about "which one of them was considered to be greatest" (vs. 24). After stating what the world considered great, the Lord cautioned them: "But you are not to be like that" (vs. 26). The world's perspective and God's differ vastly. Laying aside His kingly rights, Jesus said, "I am among you as one who serves" (vs. 27; see John 13:1-17 for an expansion of this teaching). Following Christ's example will lead us to turn from desires for power and prestige, and take up the towel of humble service.

Verses 28-30 look into the future,

when the apostles would put aside their humble estate. They could look forward to sharing the Lord's kingdom in all its fullness. Indescribable rights, privileges, and blessings await those who faithfully follow the Lord's kingdom principles (see 1 Corinthians 2:9 and 1 John 3:2). Faithfulness here on earth assures believers of heavenly rewards!

Philippians 2:1-4 portrays scriptural ideas on serving others, and the verses that follow show

Bible Studies for Life

with Ann Maniscalco



Christ's model. As we think of recent decisions and actions, let's ask the Lord to reveal areas that need to be placed under His lordship. Our deeds should not only be motivated by the incentive of heavenly rewards; the blessings of serving others can also be experienced in our day-to-day lives. Charles Stanley addresses this in one of his In Touch Ministries devotionals: "Obedient, loving care for others brings spiritual joy."

And age has little to do with our abilities and our responsibilities to serve oth-

ers. Even young children can perform acts of kindness in Jesus' name and serve as vital components of a mission team. On the other end of the spectrum, those well-advanced in years should not consider their job on earth done. The International Mission Board website (www.imb.org) recently told of 91-year-old missions volunteer Lorena Mayhugh, who, four evenings a week, teaches English at the Baptist Student Center in Bangkok. At age 81, she moved there and has since taught over 3,000 Thai students. Struggles with macular degeneration and a painful hip don't deter her. "God sent me here," she asserts. "This is where I belong right now."

Mayhugh's quote should resonate with each of us. Hopefully, you are pursuing with passion the servanthood principles the Lord emulated. But many believers still hesitate to get involved. In a Home Life magazine article on servanthood, Bill Beausay offers these words of challenge: "The key is to make your joy about serving God's passions, not serving yourself, your ego, or your designs."

Jesus, the Servant-King, "went about doing good" (Acts 10:38 NKJV). To be considered His disciples, so must we.

Maniscalco is a member of LeMoyné Boulevard Church, Biloxi.

ABEDINI

cont. from p. 1

with several State Department staff members.

"In that meeting, [Abedini and the Sekulows] made the case that they presented at the hearing today: the State Department needs to fully engage — Secretary [of State John] Kerry needs to become personally involved — to speak out and stand

up for Pastor Saeed Abedini — a U.S. citizen — who is facing life-threatening treatment in an Iranian prison simply because of his Christian faith," ACLJ spokesman Gene Kapp said in a written statement.

More than 80 congressional members from both political parties wrote Kerry in mid-February to ask him to take action to gain Abedini's release.

The separation from their

father has been difficult for the children, Naghme Abedini told House members March 15. The children questioned why their father would no longer speak to them, she recalled.

"I had to tell them that he was in prison because he loves Jesus and that he loved them very much and he was looking for the day to come back and tuck them into bed," she said, her voice breaking with emotion.

BOATWRIGHT

cont. from p. 2

think on things such as "whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is lovely," should find words that abuse the soul to be reprehensible. Obscenity and blasphemy shouldn't be tolerated or merely dismissed. They don't signal evolution, just deterioration.

Ignoring the way people

talk in movies is like viewing a fine painting while standing in the dark. You're just not seeing the big picture.

Editor's note: In addition to writing for Baptist Press, Boatwright reviews films for www.previewonline.org. He is also a regular contributor to *The World and Everything In It*, a weekly radio program from WORLD News Group.

Just for the Record



BRADFORD CHAPEL CHURCH, CALHOUN CITY, recently held a skeet shoot. Shown are some of the participants.



WADE CHURCH, MOSS POINT, held a baby dedication service Feb. 3. Shown are Cheryl Colvin, children's ministry coordinator; Ginny Johnson and Bryan Hancock, parents, with Ava Brynleigh Hancock.

GRANDVIEW CHURCH, PEARL

recently honored organist Kristi McMillan for 30 years of service. A special worship service featuring vocal, instrumental, and spoken tributes was presented at the evening service followed by a fellowship.



In other Church News:

► **Clarke County Association** reports that the churches in the association have averaged over \$75,000 in annual gifts to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering since 2009. This year's gifts totaled \$75,170.00. Grady Crowell, AMD.

► **Bellevue Church, Pontotoc County**, will host its annual winter Bible study Mar. 24 - 27. Sun., 6 p.m.; Mon. - Wed., 7 p.m. The study will be on the last five days of Jesus' life from the gospel of Luke. Jimmy Carr, speaker; Tommy Inmon, pastor.

GILLS-BURG CHURCH, OSYKA, recently held a rededication service in the fellowship hall of the Old Gillsburg Church, which has been refurbished for the youth to use as a meetings space. Shown are some of the members.



Staff Changes



FIRST CHURCH, HELENA, has called David Horton as pastor. He and his family come from Douglasville, Ga. He is shown with his wife Becky and daughters Lee-Anna and Kaitlyn. His first sermon was Feb. 3.

Easter Services

► **Park Haven Church, Laurel**, will be presenting its 8th annual drive through crucifixion Mar. 22 & 23 from 7 - 9 p.m. For more information, call (601) 425-2150.

► **Damascus Church, Flora**, will present its Easter program Mar. 24, 10:30 a.m. The Easter sunrise service will be 7:00 a.m., Mar. 31 with breakfast to follow. Tray Earnhart, pastor.

